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TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW MEXICO.

LAS CRUCES, N. M., *Dec.* 16, 1864.

FELLOW CITIZENS:

I have felt very reluctant to address you in this public manner, even on a matter of the greatest importance to yourselves; but a belief that I owe it to you as a duty, impels me to this course; and I beg that you will accept this reason as my apology.

Doubtless you have all seen, in the public prints, a controversy going on—in which I have had no part—with reference to the Navajo Indians. As it has been my fortune, under Providence, to have been instrumental in the removal of this formidable tribe—at least, to have formed certain plans leading to such a result, which plans were efficiently executed, mainly by troops raised in your own territory—perhaps it may not be out of place in me to set forth some of the principal reasons which had an influence in shaping my course from the beginning, to this end. These reasons being understood by yourselves, you will be able the better to judge whether or not the action based upon them, has been wise.

From time immemorial these Indians had subsisted upon the flocks and herds of your fathers; had, times without number, even in one single hour, reduced whole families from comparative wealth to poverty. Their ravages had impoverished not only your country, but these barbarians had murdered your people; had slain your fathers—your brothers—your children; or had carried many of them into a horrible and hopeless captivity, until there was hardly a home in the land which was not filled with mourning and with hearts made desolate.

Your ancestors, under the Spanish Government, made many campaigns against them, and many treaties of peace with them. But the Indians soon forgot the terror which had been inspired

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by the presence of the troops in their country, and soon forgot the obligations to which they had pledged themselves, in each successive treaty.

Then came other campaigns and other treaties, under the Mexican Republic, and you all know with what result. Again the Navajoes forgot the punishment they had received, and, over and over again, broke their treaties, as of old.

After the annexation of New Mexico to the United States, by the Treaty of Guadaloupe Hidalgo, the troops from the north commenced *their* campaigns, with as high hopes of a permanent success as your fathers had entertained. First Doniphan his, then Washington, then Sumner, then Bonneville, then Miles, then Canby: all of them of our best men. It is true they gained many advantages, but concluded, each one his campaign, by the inevitable treaty. And what *now* was the result? You can all answer for me, because this brings matters down to your own times. Why, the treaties were broken, and, on some occasions, even before the troops had been entirely withdrawn from the Navajo country. Navajo Faith, like Punic Faith, became, at length, a scoff and a jeer. The Navajoes themselves, from long experience in this matter, had learned to see that the prudent way to end a campaign against them, was to come in with a white flag and say they wanted peace; say that the murders and robberies had been committed by some of their bad young men; that this thing should not occur again; that if our people would only smoke and be friends, and make a treaty, *this time* it should be kept most sacredly! Over, and over, and over again, this was done. Fellow citizens, is not all this the truth? I appeal to any one man of you all, if one single point, thus far stated, can be denied.

Well, now, in finding myself in command of the troops within your borders, it naturally occurred to me that, to cure this great evil from which your territory had been so long a prey, some new remedy must be adopted. You know that I had lived amongst you for several years, upon a former occasion, and had had many opportunities, not only of learning somewhat of the geography of New Mexico, but of knowing some little of your Indian difficulties. When I came here this time, it not only became my pro-

fessional business, but my bounden duty, not only to yourselves, but to the government, to devise *some* plan which might, with God's blessing, forever bring these troubles to an end.

In a short time after my arrival, some eighteen of the Navajo Chiefs came to see me, and said they wanted to make a treaty of peace. I told them it was unnecessary for us to go through with the *form* of making a treaty; that if their people committed no murders nor robberies on our people, there would be peace without any treaty. That we were not children to be beguiled any more by their promises; that we had learned not to believe those promises, and did not care to hear them. That hereafter we would judge of their sincerity solely by their acts. That if they committed any more murders and robberies, as surely as that the sun shone, so surely would the troops come and, this time, make a war upon them which they would long remember.

They said they never had been refused the making of a treaty before; but returned to their country, promising to do the best they could to keep their people from perpetrating any more acts of hostility. What was the result of these promises? Why, in less than six week's time, murders and robberies were committed on every hand. Finally the spring of 1863 came, when, having ascertained that a great many Navajoes claimed to belong to a peace party, word was sent that all who did not wish to be exposed to the perils of war, must come in and go down to the Bosque Redondo, where they should be fed and cared for, until those who remained hostile should be subdued. That we could not discriminate between the innocent and the guilty unless this were done; that unless those who claimed to be our friends would thus separate themselves from our acknowledged enemies, we should be obliged to consider all we encountered as enemies, once the war began, when on themselves would rest the consequences, and not upon us. The reply they made was, that not a Navajo would come in under such conditions. Word was again sent to them to consider the matter more maturely; that the peace party should have until the 20th of the following July, in which to make up their minds and come in; that the door should remain open until that day. Afterwards, it would be forever closed, and the war

would begin in earnest. Still, not one Navajo came. They did not believe that we *were* in earnest, and on that day, as had been promised, the war began.

A force, composed mainly of your own people, was sent against them, and underwent the greatest toil and privation in their pursuit. On the march, whether by night or by day, whether over rugged mountains, through deep *cañons*, or across dry and dusty plains, these gallant children of New Mexico pursued their hereditary foe, with a tenacity of purpose which never relaxed; with a fortitude that never gave way under hunger, or thirst, or fatigue, or the vicissitudes of the seasons. Every man seemed animated with the resolution to repay two centuries of accumulated wrongs; to let their treacherous and implacable enemy *feel* that, finally, an avenger was on his path, who was inflexible in his determinations. Never did soldiers have a better cause, and never did soldiers acquit themselves with more of genuine heroism. These troops went out from under your own roofs, and encountered all this toil, this exposure, these dangers, for *you*, and for your children, and your children's children. I am sure you do not really and seriously propose any course which will look, on your part, like a want of appreciation of their motives, of their toils and exposure, or a want of gratitude for all the good they accomplished.

What were the results of all these labors and all this fighting? Little by little, a few Navajoes were captured here, a small band there, and, by and by, some began voluntarily to surrender, until we had on our hands quite a large number of prisoners. We could not feed them in the Navajo country—that was impossible. Nor had we troops to guard them there, even though we could have furnished them with subsistence. We could not, as christians, kill them; we could not see them perish by starvation; we could not turn them loose, for the war itself was still raging; and we had had nearly two hundred years of the making of treaties, which had been broken almost as soon as made. It was *clearly seen* that, even admitting it would have been good policy to place the captive Navajoes upon a Reservation in their own country, there could be found no one piece of irrigable and fertile land,

large enough for such Reservation, within all its boundaries. Besides, the enormous cost of land-transportation for stores, not only for the Indians, but for the large military establishment which would have to be kept up to guard them, could not and would not be incurred by the Government, for the maintainance of any such a system, in a region so very distant from the source of supply. But such a plan was not admitted to be a good one, of itself, even when freed from these fatal objections. For in that country, so familiar to every man, woman and child of the Navajo nation—so formidable from its huge *mesas*, its rugged mountains, its deep forests, its labyrinthine cañons—ten times the number of troops now within this Department could not prevent the Indians, by ones and twos, from leaving such Reservation whenever it should please them to do so. Thus the whole system would crumble away and fall through, as totally impracticable. What, then, would have been the result? Why, still more murders, more robberies; then another war and—then what? why, of course, another treaty; and so on forever, in that inevitable circle, which had become as fatal to the prosperity of New Mexico, as the shirt of Nessus to Hercules.

In 1852 and in 1854, and again early in the spring of 1863, it had been my fortune to visit the Bosque Redondo, on the Pecos River, and I had seen that the extent of rich bottom lands there, were capable of *growing* crops sufficient to support a large population; and that broad plains spread out on every hand, which were covered with fine pasturage. Here, then, the Indians could be brought; here they could be fed with comparative cheapness; here was irrigable land enough, lying in one body, eventually to supply all their wants, and here, too, were broad plains, over which they could not pass and, at the same time, elude pursuit and recapture. I feel justified in saying that there is not another spot of vacant land, between the Pecos River and the Colorado of the West, which possesses any two of these essential elements for a Reservation, *much less, all of these elements.* Here, then, at the Bosque Redondo, it was resolved to place all the captive Navajoes, as is shown by my letter to the War Department, dated early in September, 1863, a copy of which is hereunto

appended for your consideration. This then became what has been called a policy, and this policy has been fully endorsed and adopted by the General Government as its own, and a determination has been expressed by those who control such matters at Washington, to give this experiment a full and fair trial.

Now, fellow citizens, it is reported that there are people living amongst you, who are not natives of the soil; who are said not to have a horn or a hoof of stock to lose; who have no permanent interest in your Territory; who, neither for themselves nor for their children, have a care whether, or not, New Mexico ever shall become a powerful and wealthy state; who have lost no friend or relative by the bloody hand of the Navajo; who have no abiding place here, except for a season; *but who have endeavored, and who will endeavor*, for purposes of their own, to persuade you that this is all wrong. I pray that you may not be deluded by any of their sophistries against what must, on reflection, appear to be substantial truths, which no cunning hand can veil from your clear perception, if you will but look toward them.

We have seen various plans tried for the subjugation and pacification of the Navajoes, and all of them, up to the present time, have failed. *This plan* appeals to our reason as, logically, the best. It is as plain to us that it is the best, as that two and two make four. For myself, and for the troops, I can safely say, we have labored in this cause and for this policy as being as correct and as easily to be demonstrated as that simple problem. And we regard all attempts to undo what has already been accomplished, with so many sacrifices and at so great a cost, as not only wicked, but as an absurdity as great as an attempt would be to convince you, my fellow citizens, that two and two make five. Such an attempt is a gross insult to the good sense of the people who have suffered so long and with so much sorrow. It is dangerous to all the present and prospective interests of this great territory. It is pernicious to the present safety of yourselves and your property, as well as to the welfare of your children and their children, for years to come. This conviction is firmly rooted in my mind, and should be more firmly rooted in yours, for you

are the parties directly interested. Then, when such grave consequences, for good or for evil to yourselves and your posterity, depend on what we are now doing, or may be about to do, it is well to divest this question of all its robes and look it squarely in the face. Let us hasten slowly; and let us calmly consider a few of the principal points which are made by those who profess to be adverse to the present policy.

The Navajoes are Arizona Indians. It is admitted that some of them have resided on the western side of the imaginary line of longitude which divides the two territories. But where did these Indians do their robbing and murdering? Why, here in New Mexico. *You were the sufferers*, not people of Arizona. What difference could it make to you, in point of fact, whether the Navajoes come from Arizona or from Missouri, so that they kill your brethren and rob your flocks, and so that, by confining them upon a Reservation, this killing and robbing shall forever cease?

The Bosque is your favorite pasture ground. Let me ask you, who ever kept a flock of sheep at that point, ninety miles south-east of Anton Chico, and did not lose that flock? Can any of you name the owner and the time when this was done? Now, the Navajoes have yielded up their *whole* country, a country larger than the State of Ohio, for the few acres set apart for them upon the Pecos River—a country unsurpassed as a pastoral region, in the whole world.

The tribe may rise and attack the people. Are they not upon an open plain, and embarrassed by their women and children, whom they love and whom they would not endanger? Could they move, or make one hostile demonstration without our knowledge? Would ten thousand men, women and children, exposed upon the plains, and poorly armed, be likely to rise against one hundred thousand well-armed inhabitants, assisted by all the troops within the Department? *Such* a thought would be a poor compliment to the resolution and courage of the people, to say nothing of how it reflects upon those in the military service. Now, then, when we had faithfully kept all our promises to these captive Indians, suppose they should rise? This would, then,

give you good reason to cut the Gordian knot which has been so difficult to untie, with one terrible blow, and to wipe the whole Navajo nation from the face of the earth. The Navajoes are not fools, and they understand all this as well as ourselves.

Have not promises been made that, if they would surrender, we would locate them at the Bosque Redondo and Bosque Grande, and feed them there until they can raise enough to support themselves? Now that they have fulfilled *their* part of the compact, by surrendering and placing themselves in our power, shall we, who claim to be christians, break our faith with these pagans, who have confided in our integrity? Such a thought, even, would be the gravest insult that could be offered to the people of New Mexico.

But, it is said that feeding the Navajoes raises the price of provisions. The high price of provisions is consequent upon the great difference between the value of our paper currency and the value of gold. Blot every Navajo out of existence to-day, and the price of food would hardly be affected. It is true there is some scarcity this year, owing to the partial failure of the crops. Such an emergency was partly provided for, so far as the Navajoes were concerned, by ordering supplies from the States. This gave great offense to certain parties, who exclaimed, "why bring supplies from the States and not buy from our own producers?" The Chief Commissary then advertised for certain articles of food, grown here. Then arose the cry, "if you buy here, you raise the price of provisions!" But it is admitted that the price of corn, and wheat, and beans, and fresh meat, has risen somewhat, from the increased demand. But who gets the benefit of these increased prices? Yourselves, fellow citizens, who raise these articles and have them for sale. No other character of supplies is affected in price by holding the Navajoes. Go into a store to buy a yard of cloth, or a pound of coffee, or a pair of shoes. Is the price now as it used to be? Is the price of a load of wood or a load of hay as it used to be? It is hardly worth your while even to consider such puerile arguments against holding the Navajoes. Here, now, is a good market at your very door for every pound of bread-stuff which you can raise, and every

head of stock which you desire to sell, until this people can support themselves. It is a new phase in political economy when a people object to having a ready market and high prices for the fruit of their farms and for the stock from their pastures; and he would be an intrepid logician who would make the attempt to tax your credulity so far as to expect you to believe that, to have this ready market and these high prices for all the surplus food you can spare, will be your ruin.

What are the essential facts with reference to this matter? *Before now*, did not the *people* of New Mexico clothe and feed the Navajoes? *Now*, this is done by the United States. Can you object to this? Will you insist upon it that it is better for yourselves, again, to do this? One might suppose you had borne this burden quite long enough. At all events, the Government has thought so, and proposes to relieve you of it. If this be well, why think of having it undone?

The military authorities have labored under many disadvantages this year, with reference to captive Indians. In the first place, it was difficult to get farming tools for them. But, by great energy on the part of the staff officers, in causing to be manufactured in government shops some essential articles, and in getting others from long distances, we were enabled, in the spring, to have planted, at the Bosque Redondo, nearly three thousand acres of corn. Until the middle of August this immense field promised to yield abundantly. The corn was so fine in color and so luxuriant in growth as to excite the admiration of all who saw it. The Indians were justly proud of it. But, after the ears had formed, this magnificent field was attacked by the *Corn Worm*, improperly called, by others, the army worm, and was *totally* destroyed! This was a visitation of God! No human forecast could have prevented it. It is estimated that this field, had the corn ripened, would have produced ten millions of pounds, but for this calamity, which would have been an abundance to have fed the whole tribe for a year. Thus far the Navajoes have borne this terrible loss with fortitude, and have cheerfully gone to work again to prepare this field and to break up others for planting next year, when, with the blessing of Provi-

dence upon their labors, they will be placed above want, it is to be hoped, forever.

New Mexico is eminently a stock growing country. Arizona is, and is destined to be for all time, the greatest gold, and silver, and copper bearing country ever known. The miners who will be attracted thither, must send to the nearest market for beef and mutton, and for coarse woolens. Where is that market? It is *here* with yourselves, fellow citizens. Now, would you do so short-sighted a thing as to plant down again upon the great thoroughfare leading hence to this new El Dorado, ten or twelve thousand Indians, to murder those who would travel to and fro between these countries, and to rob from every flock, and herd, and train upon the road? You have too much forecast, and can see too brilliant a future looming up for yourselves and your children, to permit this to be done, if a voice in the matter is to be had by yourselves. I am sure of it.

Besides, once the Indians are removed from the open country, between the settled portions of Arizona and New Mexico, the whole route through to California becomes safe, and the invincible laws of climate will eventually force, not only stage lines, but railroad lines along that route, which is removed, equally, from the frozen regions of the north and the terrible heats of the Gila and Yuma Deserts. There are those now amongst you who will live to see what is here predicted. Let the Navajo nation again be placed upon this line, and you retard the advance of your country for an indefinite number of years. This policy, which you are expected to sustain, is not for a day but for all coming time. And even the feeding of these Indians at the present exhorbitant rates, is cheaper than to fight them. This admits of not a single doubt. But as you, fellow citizens, are no longer called upon to feed them, this question does not, in reality, concern you: but is one solely for the consideration of the General Government.

By this policy there is another great point gained by the people of New Mexico, which has not been duly appreciated. The Navajoes have for ages been the hereditary enemies of the Comanches and Kioways, and it may be said that, on the Pecos, they become

interposed as a barrier between the latter Indians and the inhabitants of this Territory. There is no danger of Comanche or Kioway raids while twenty-five hundred Navajo warriors are off upon the plains, ninety miles to the east of our settlements. This you will all admit.

What I have done, or directed to be done, in all this matter, has been from a sincere desire to promote your interests, and to see that the means of the Government placed at my disposal, were devoted to insuring the present safety, as well as the future and permanent prosperity of yourselves and your descendants. I have acted conscientiously, not only towards the people, but towards the Indians. This matter has commanded my attention, my study, and my anxiety, for nearly two years. To the officers and soldiers who carried into practical effect each successive idea which commenced and elaborated this policy, is due all the credit of accomplishing what to them was a Herculean task. Therefore, to them alone who performed the labor, and not to me, you owe a debt of lasting gratitude. All I can ask is that you will raise no unreasonable clamors against the important measures which have been inaugurated for your own good. Wait patiently and hopefully until this great experiment has been thoroughly tested.

If, within a reasonable time, say four or five years, it prove to be a failure, then let some other plan be adopted, such as the wisdom of that coming day, with all the lights which will *then* be before it, may determine upon as being for the best.

JAMES H. CARLETON.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO,
SANTA FÉ, NEW MEXICO, SEPT. 6, 1862.

GENERAL: I have the honor to report that I have this week sent 51 Navajo Indians, men, women and children, to Fort Sumner, at the Bosque Redondo, on the Pecos River, where, as I have before informed you, I have 425 Mescalero Apaches, held as prisoners. The purpose had in view is to send *all* captured Navajoes and Apaches to that point, and there to feed and take care of them until they have opened farms and become able to support themselves, as the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico are doing. The War Department has already approved of this in the case of the Apaches, and authorized that Fort Sumner should be a chaplain post, so that the chaplain there could educate the Indian children. This year those Indians have been contented and happy. They planted, under the direction of their agent and with a little help, some large fields of corn, and, now that they have their *acequia* dug, will next year raise quite enough to support themselves. This the Navajoes can be persuaded to do as well.

At the Bosque Redondo there is arable land enough for all the Indians of this family, (the Navajoes and Apaches have descended from the same stock and speak the same language,) and I would respectfully recommend that now the war is vigorously prosecuted against the Navajoes, that the only peace that can ever be made with them must rest on the basis that they move on to these lands, and, like the Pueblos, become an agricultural people, and cease to be nomads. This should be a *sine qua non*. As soon as the snows of winter admonish them of the suffering to which their families will be exposed, I have great hopes of getting most of the tribe. The knowledge of the perfidy of these Navajoes, gained after two centuries of experience, is such as to lead us to put no faith in their promises. They have no government to make treaties. They are a patriarchal people. One set of families may make promises, but the other set will not heed them. They understand the direct application of force as a law. If its application be removed, that moment they become lawless. This has been tried over, and over, and over again, and at great expense. The purpose now is, never to relax the application of

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force with a people that can no more be trusted than you can trust the wolves that run through their mountains. To gather them together little by little on to a Reservation, away from the haunts, and hills, and hiding places of their country, and then be kind to them; there teach their children how to read and write; teach them the arts of peace; teach them the truths of christianity. Soon they will acquire new habits, new ideas, new modes of life; the old Indians will die off and carry with them all latent longing for murdering and robbing; the young ones will take their places without these longings; and thus, little by little, they will become a happy and a contented people, and Navajo wars will be remembered only as something that belongs entirely to the past. Even until they can raise enough to be self-sustaining, *you can feed them cheaper than you can fight them.*

You will observe that the Bosque Redondo is far down the Pecos, on the open plains, where these Indians can have no lateral contact with settlers. If the Government will only set apart a Reservation of *forty miles square*, with Fort Sumner, at the Bosque Redondo, in the center, all the good land will be covered, and keep the settlers a proper distance from the Indians. See the inclosed map. There is no place in the Navajo country fit for a Reservation; and even if there were, it would not be wise to leave it there; for, little by little, the Indians would steal away into their mountain fastnesses again, and then, as of old, would come a new war, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

I know these views are practical, practicable and humane; are just to the suffering people, as well as to the aggressive, perfidious, butchering Navajoes. If I can have one more *full* regiment of cavalry, and authority to raise one independent company in each county in the Territory, they can soon be carried to a final result.

I am, General, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,

Brigadier General Commanding.

Brigadier General LORENZO THOMAS,

Adjutant General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

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